



Media release: embargoed to 5 March 2025

MANCHESTER LITERATURE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES SIX OUTSTANDING WRITERS FOR THIS YEAR'S SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAMME

Ahead of its main event in Autumn 2025, Manchester Literature Festival presents a line-up to inspire, motivate and intrigue this Spring and Summer. The programme featuring broadcasters, high profile novelists and feminist campaigners offers audiences captivating stories and timely discussions on some of the most urgent issues of the day from the AI revolution and the metaverse to maternity leave, misogyny, water rights and the environment.

Booking opens for Manchester Literature Festival members on Wednesday 5 March 2025 with general tickets on sale on Friday 7 March 2025.

More about the line-up:

Emma Barnett Monday 17 March, Central Library

Broadcaster, author and proud Mancunian, Emma Barnett discusses her relatable and funny new book *Maternity Service*. Written in real time after the birth of her second child, Emma explores the challenges faced by women when their lives are turned upside down. Emma's perspective is invaluable for anyone with a rose-tinted view of what this period of a woman's life entails and particularly for anyone about to embark on their own period of maternity service. Hosted by writer and the Feminist Book Club host, Kate Feld.

Kevin Barry Thursday 1 May, Central Library

'A true wonder' – Max Porter

The award-winning Irish author discusses *The Heart in Winter*, his first Western and The Sunday Times Historical Novel of the Year. This novel is a rollicking, thrilling and hilarious ride, described by Anne Enright as 'An absolute belter of a book' and Jon McGregor as 'A glorious and haunted yarn.'

Marvellous.’ Kevin Barry is the author of four novels and three short story collections. His awards include the Goldsmiths Prize and the Sunday Times EFG Short Story Award. His previous novel *Night Boat to Tangier* was longlisted for The Booker Prize.

Presented by Manchester Literature Festival in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Robert Macfarlane Friday 9 May, Contact

“A rich and visionary work of immense beauty. Macfarlane is a memory keeper. What is broken in our societies, he mends with words. Rarely does a book hold such power, passion, and poetry in its exploration of nature.” Elif Shafak

One of our most beloved chroniclers of nature, Robert Macfarlane discusses his thought-provoking new book *Is a River Alive?* Through three key waterways: the Río Los Cedros, the wounded creeks, lagoons and estuaries of Chennai and the Mutehekau Shipu, Robert asks, ‘What is the river saying?’ Passionate, original and revelatory, *Is A River Alive?* is Robert’s most personal and most political book to date. Robert is the international bestselling writer of *Underland*, *Landmarks*, and *The Old Ways*, and the co-creator of *The Lost Words* and *The Lost Spells* with artist Jackie Morris. The event is hosted by **Helen Mort**, award-winning poet, novelist and fellow nature lover.

Laura Bates Tuesday 13 May, Central Library

The Everyday Sexism campaigner joins us to discuss her new book *The Age of Sexism: How the AI revolution is Reinventing Misogyny*. AI powered technologies are revolutionising our lives and putting women and girls in danger. From chatbots to sex robots, from deep fakes to the metaverse, Laura examines how existing forms of discrimination, inequality and harassment are being coded into the very foundations of our future world while a small group of obscenely rich white men prioritise their profits over our lives. Laura is the founder of the Everyday Sexism Project. Her books include *Everyday Sexism*, *Fix the System Not the Women*, *Men Who Hate Women*, *Misogynation* and *Girl Up*. The evening is hosted by poet **Helen Mort**.

Presented by Manchester Literature Festival in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Colm Tóibín Monday 16 June, Central Library

Festival favourite Colm Tóibín is back to Manchester to celebrate his latest novel *Long Island*, where he returns to the characters from *Brooklyn*, twenty years later. Colm Tóibín is the author of ten previous novels, three of which were nominated for the Booker Prize. He has also written two collections of stories and many works of non-fiction. His most recent novel, *The Magician*, won the Rathbones Folio Award in 2022. *Brooklyn* was made into an award-winning film starring Saoirse Ronan.

The evening is presented by Manchester Literature Festival and Waterstones Deansgate in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Attica Locke Wednesday 16 July, Central Library

‘This is the best kind of thriller: as literate and thoughtful as it is fast-moving. Attica Locke has bags of style, and sings the blues on every page’ - Mick Herron (Slow Horses)

The American crime writer and script writer makes a rare visit to the UK to discuss her

latest, gripping, politically charged crime novel, *Guide Me Home*. Attica Locke is the author of six novels including *Heaven, My Home*, a Waterstones Thriller of the Month; *Bluebird, Bluebird*, winner of the CWA Steel Dagger; *Pleasantville*, longlisted for the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction, and *Black Water Rising*, shortlisted for the Orange Prize. Her screenwriting and producer credits include *When They See Us*, *Empire*, and the Emmy-nominated *Little Fires Everywhere*.

Presented by Manchester Literature Festival in partnership with the Centre for New Writing and Creative Manchester.

Ends

For press enquiries and review tickets please contact:

Catharine Braithwaite cat@we-r-lethal.com 07947 644110

Shelagh Bourke she@we-r-lethal.com 07971 819 016

Full festival details visit <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/upcoming-events>

Join the conversation: #MLF2025 @McrLitFest

<https://www.threads.net/@mcrLitfest>

<https://bsky.app/profile/mcrlitfest.bsky.social>

Ticket and booking information:

Booking opens for Manchester Literature Festival members on Wednesday 5 March. General tickets on sale on Friday 7 March 2025.

Manchester Literature Festival membership from as little as £20 per year. Full details of membership benefits and buying options [HERE](#).

Emma Barnett in Conversation

Tuesday 7 March 2023, 7pm

Central Library

Tickets £10/£8

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/emma-barnett>

Kevin Barry in Conversation

Thursday 1 May, 7pm

Central Library

Tickets £10/£8

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/kevin-barry>

Robert Macfarlane in Conversation

Friday 9 May, 7pm

Contact

Tickets £14/£12

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/robert-macfarlane>

Laura Bates in Conversation

Tuesday 13 May, 7pm

Central Library

Tickets £10/£8

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/laura-bates>

Colm Tóibín in Conversation

Monday 16 June, 7pm

Central Library

Tickets £12/£10

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/colm-toibin>

Attica Locke in Conversation

Wednesday 16 July, 7pm

Central Library

Tickets: £10/£8

To book: <https://manchesterliteraturefestival.co.uk/events/attica-locke>

Over the past 19 years, the Festival has featured many of the biggest names in literary fiction and spoken word as well as prominent cultural figures from across the globe, including Monica Ali, Martin Amis, Tori Amos, Raymond Antrobus, Simon Armitage, Kate Atkinson, Margaret Atwood, Malorie Blackman, Malika Booker, Joe Boyd, Jung Chang, Neneh Cherry, Gillian Clark, Susanna Clarke, Kit de Waal, Kwame Dawes, Jeremy Deller, Roddy Doyle, Margaret Drabble, Jennifer Egan, Anne Enright, Bernardine Evaristo, Percival Everett, Neil Gaiman, Guy Garvey, Matt Haig, Paula Hawkins, Natalie Haynes, Seamus Heaney, Lindsay Hilsum, A.M. Homes, Alan Hollinghurst, Jackie Kay, Rebecca F Kuang, Kazuo Ishiguro, Howard Jacobson, Alan Johnson, Daisy Johnson, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Barbara Kingsolver, Karl Ove Knausgaard, Hanif Kureishi, Deborah Levy, Olivia Laing, Valeria Luiselli, Johnny Marr, Paul Mason, Armistead Maupin, Val McDermid, David Mitchell, Paul Morley, Michael Morpurgo, Walter Mosley, Kate Mosse, Andrew Motion, Jo Nesbo, Maggie O'Farrell, Andrew O'Hagan, Ben Okri, David Olusoga, David Peace, Max Porter, Richard Powers, Ian Rankin, Kamila Shamsie, Will Self, Elif Shafak, Lemn Sissay, Zadie Smith, Meera Sodha, Elizabeth Strout, Douglas Stuart, Kae Tempest, Neil Tennant, Colm Tóibín, Rose Tremain, Dame Harriet Walter, Sarah Waters, Colson Whitehead, Jeanette Winterson, Xinran and Asako Yuzuki.

The Festival has also welcomed prominent activists, campaigners and disruptors including Patrisse Cullors (co-founder of Black Lives Matter), Angela Davis, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Edward Enninful, Afua Hirsch, Caroline Criado Perez, Caroline Lucas, George Monbiot, Arundhati Roy, Rebecca Solnit, Gloria Steinem, Senator Bernie Sanders, Yanis Varoufakis and the late Vivienne Westwood.

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